

4TH GRADE

# 现代英语

第四级

· 读与写 ·

## READING AND WRITING

STUDENTS'  
BOOK 4

Patrick Goldsmith

**M** China  
Macmillan **HEP**

# MODERN ENGLISH

for University Students

## Reading and Writing

Students' Book

Grade 4

Patrick Goldsmith



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## 现代英语

读与写

第4级

帕特里克·戈德史密斯

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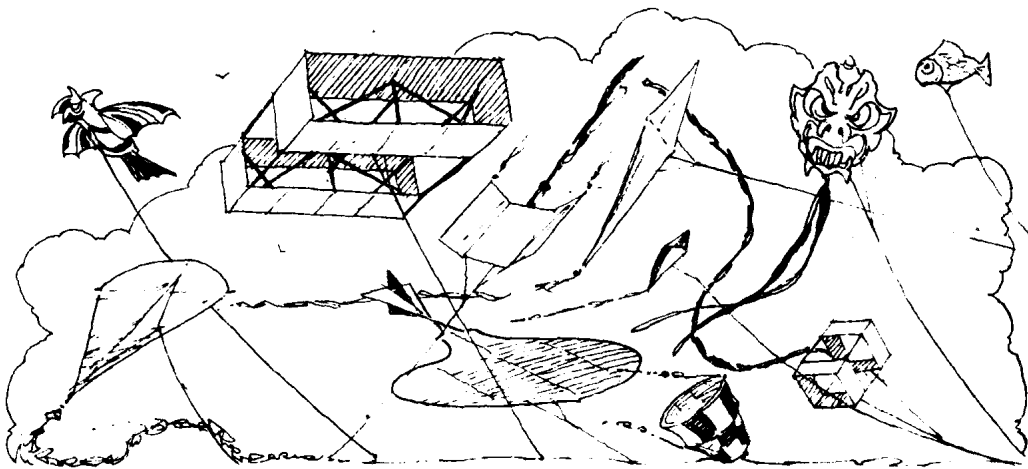
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## UNIT 1

### KITES

There are a number of stories in Chinese literature relating to the origin of kites. One story tells of a farmer, Meng Chia, who was attending a picnic when his hat was blown from his head and carried up into the sky. Because a string was tied to the hat, it sailed about like a kite, according to one version of the tale. Another story based on the shape of the traditional straw hat tells of a young man whose

5 relatives tried to kill him by locking him in a granary and setting the grain alight. The young man saved himself by leaping from the top of the building, by holding his hat like a parachute, and falling slowly to the ground. One document describes a craftsman in the time of Confucius, about 500 BC, who devoted three years to the construction of a kite made of wood. Unfortunately, the kite crashed to the ground and was destroyed after the first day of flight.

10 The use of kites for amusement almost certainly originated in China. Chinese history is filled with tales of kite festivals and kite games. They were even used for telling fortunes: the higher a person's kite rose in the sky, the higher that individual would rise in wealth and fame. At one point in Chinese history, kite flying had become so popular that such festivals were banned by the emperor because they threatened the nation's food production. Instead of planting and cultivating crops, everybody

15 was involved in flying kites.

One traditional Chinese kite festival was associated with the story of a farmer whose love of kite flying saved his own life and the lives of his wife and children. According to the story, the farmer dreamed that a terrible disaster would strike his home on the ninth day of the ninth month. The farmer was so worried that, when that day arrived, he took his family on a picnic in the hills. During

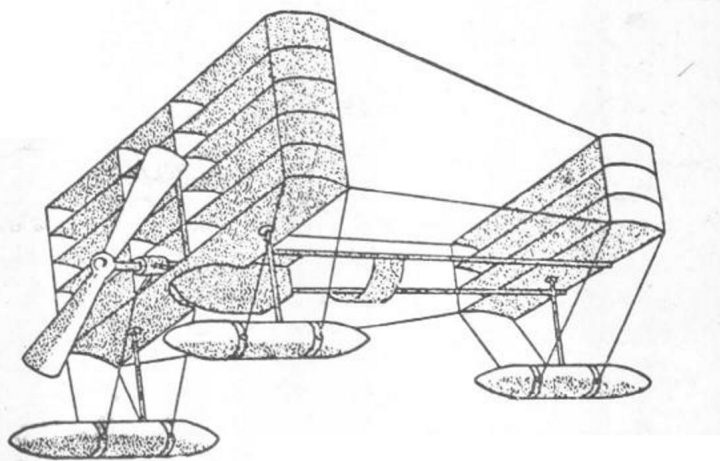
20 the afternoon, they sailed a kite high into the sky and were so interested in the kite that they lost track of time until it was quite dark. When the farmer and his family returned home, they found that their house had collapsed, destroying all their possessions. Each year after that the farmer and his family flew kites on the ninth day of the ninth month. And, as word spread of the good fortune associated with the event, others began flying kites on that date. Eventually, the custom was adopted by an

25 enormous number of people whose kites filled the sky each year on the ninth day of the ninth month.

There is also the story of an emperor, Huan Theng of the Han Dynasty, whose palace was

surrounded by enemy soldiers. The emperor ordered everybody to build specially-designed kites carrying bamboo instruments that would produce a sound like that of human voices when the wind blew through them. The kites were sent up over the enemy troops one night, when it was dark and moonless, and by the following morning all of the enemy soldiers had run off in terror.

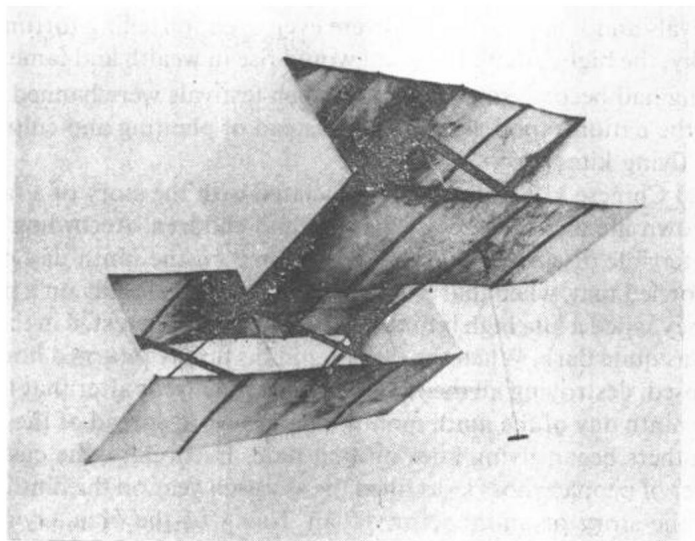
Kites of Chinese origin made an appearance in Arabian countries in the ninth century. Although identified as 'flags', construction details in the literature of Islam definitely describe the devices as paper kites with tails.



Hargrave's Flying Machine

One of the puzzles of kite history is that Marco Polo spent many years in China, where kites were apparently flown by tens of thousands of citizens during the festivals, especially in spring, but he brought back to Europe no important knowledge of the flatsurfaced kites used there. Only one brief reference to the kite is found in his writings, describing a type of "frame" on a long rope which rose in the wind and was used to predict whether a ship would have a quick and fortunate voyage. But although brief, it is certainly very interesting, for it suggests that it was relatively common for men to be lifted into the air by kites in thirteenth-century China:

The men of the ship make a frame, and at each corner and side of this framework a rope is tied, so that there are eight in total, and they are all tied at the end of a longer rope. Then they find a fool or a drunkard and tie him on the frame, as nobody in his right mind would take this risk. This is done when a strong wind is blowing. When the frame is set against the wind, it is carried up into the sky, while the men hold on by the long rope ...



Hargrave's Box Kite

The history of flight did not begin at Kitty Hawk, with the Wright brothers, nor even with Leonardo da Vinci, but many centuries ago in ancient China.

## EXERCISES

### BEFORE READING 1

Before reading the text, think about the following questions. Discuss them in groups.

- 1 For how long do you think people have been flying kites?
- 2 Where do you think kites originated?
- 3 What is the difference between kites and gliders?
- 4 Is it possible for people to fly using kites?

### WORD SCAN 2

Assign a number to each of the following words a number like this:

- flew, flight, fly, flying, flown, frame, framework, kite, parachute 1  
 China, Chinese 2  
 story, tale 3  
 amusement, event, festival, game 4  
 farmer 5  
 emperor 6  
 Marco Polo, writings, reference 7

Now write the appropriate number in the margin every time a corresponding word appears, twice or more, if there is more than one example in a line. Count pronouns such as *him* as repetitions of words. Note that some of the words are related by synonymy, while others are related by collocation

### SKIMMING 3

Use what you have discovered by doing Exercise 2 to help you decide which of the following headings best corresponds to with each sections of the text:

- 1 The farmer's story (2 paragraphs)
- 2 The spread of kites
- 3 Marco Polo and the man-lifter
- 4 Conclusion
- 5 The emperor's story
- 6 Kites for amusement
- 7 The origins of kites

### COMPREHENSION SCAN 4

Decide whether the following statements are true or false:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 All the stories in the first paragraph are true.  | T | F |
| 2 The higher your kite rises in the sky, the higher you will rise in wealth and fame.   | T | F |
| 3 The farmer took his family for a picnic in the hills because he had dreamed that a terrible disaster would strike his home. | T | F |
| 4 Huan Theng's enemies ran away because they were frightened of kites.  | T | F |
| 5 It is a puzzle of kite history that Marco Polo spent many years in China.   | T | F |
| 6 Marco Polo stated that tens of thousands of citizens flew kites during the festivals.                                       | T | F |
| 7 Men were lifted into the air on the end of a long rope attached to a kite.  | T | F |
| 8 The history of flight began in ancient China.   | T | F |

## VOCABU- LARY

- 5 (a) Find words or expressions in the text which mean approximately the same as the following words or phrases:**

- paragraph 1: jump; variation; report; skilled person
- paragraph 2: entertainment; predict; person
- paragraph 3: a very bad accident
- paragraph 4: fall down; ruin
- paragraph 5: soldiers; made
- paragraph 7: unanswered question; a wooden structure; a person who drinks too much

- (b) Now use the words you have found to fill the gaps in these sentences:**

- 1 The librarian has lost an important \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 There are often people at fairs who claim to be able to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 The general used his \_\_\_\_\_ in the most effective way possible.
- 4 The \_\_\_\_\_ was said to be due to pilot error.
- 5 He \_\_\_\_\_ across a ten-foot gap.
- 6 The storm \_\_\_\_\_ millions of pounds' worth of equipment.
- 7 It is still a \_\_\_\_\_ how 170 men could conquer an entire empire.
- 8 It turned out that the driver was a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9 His \_\_\_\_\_ of the story was quite different.
- 10 We couldn't decide which \_\_\_\_\_ to buy for the picture.
- 11 Many buildings \_\_\_\_\_ in the earthquake.
- 12 The machine was very cleverly \_\_\_\_\_.
- 13 He is a very strange \_\_\_\_\_.
- 14 The man who made this violin was a real \_\_\_\_\_.
- 15 Flying kites is not my idea of \_\_\_\_\_.

## COHESION **6**

- Choose the most suitable completion for each of the following sentences:**

- 1 *and carried up into the sky* (lines 2-3) means
  - A and the hat was carried up into the sky
  - B and Meng Chia was carried up into the sky
  - C and the hat carried a string up into the sky
- 2 *They* (line 11) refers to
  - A kite festivals
  - B kite games
  - C kites
- 3 *that individual* (line 12) refers to
  - A kite
  - B one
  - C wealth
  - D fame
- 4 *they* (line 14) refers to
  - A the Chinese
  - B kites
  - C such festivals
- 5 *carrying bamboo instruments* (line 28) means
  - A everyone was carrying bamboo instruments
  - B the kites were carrying bamboo instruments
  - C the emperor was carrying bamboo instruments
- 6 *although identified as 'flags'* (lines 31-32) refers to
  - A construction details
  - B the literature of Islam

- C kites  
 7 *and was used* (line 38) means  
 A a long rope was used  
 B a frame was used  
 C the wind was used  
 8 *it* in 'it is certainly very interesting' (line 39) refers to  
 A the reference  
 B the kite  
 C nothing

## VARIETIES OF MEANING

- 7 (a) Match each of the different meanings of *spread* with the correct explanation (A-G) below:

- 1 I've just bought some cheese *spread*.
- 2 I wish you would *spread* the butter more evenly.
- 3 The forest fire *spread* very fast.
- 4 They *spread* the work over a few weeks.
- 5 The news *spread* very quickly.
- 6 They paid for a *double-page spread* in the magazine, to advertise their product
- 7 It *spread* its wings and flew away

- A to distribute over a period  
 B A soft substance made to be put on bread  
 C two facing pages  
 D to grow in area  
 E to travel  
 F to stretch out  
 G to apply on a surface

- (b) With which of the above meanings does the word appear in the text?

## WORD FAMILIES

- 8 (a) Choose the correct form of the following words to complete each of the sentences below:

RELATE    RELATION    RELATIONSHIP    RELATIVE    RELATIVELY  
 RELATIVITY

- 1 He had an excellent \_\_\_\_\_ with his customers.
- 2 It was \_\_\_\_\_ easy to get here.
- 3 He has hundreds of friends and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 People sometimes say that, in morals, everything is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 Albert Einstein is famous for his theory of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 She finds it difficult to \_\_\_\_\_ to her colleagues at the office.

Note that several of these words can be used in other ways. Check with your dictionary, and write sentences to show these other uses.

- (b) Now do the same with these words:

ORIGIN    ORIGINAL    ORIGINALLY    ORIGINATE

- 1 As a writer, it is very difficult to be completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Nobody really knows where fire \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 There were \_\_\_\_\_ three of them.
- 4 Scientist still cannot decide about the \_\_\_\_\_ of the universe.

## GRAMMAR SCAN

The following sentences contain examples of the use of particular grammar patterns. Mark the sentences which give examples of grammar points that

appear in the passage, and show on which line they appear. For example, sentence number 1 corresponds to line 27, 'The emperor ordered everybody to build ...'

- 1 The captain *told his crew to abandon ship.*
- 2 *Whose shoes are those?*
- 3 She is the woman *whose daughter works at the factory.*
- 4 The *further you walk, the longer it will take you to get back.*
- 5 *They were so interested* that they forgot all about the time.
- 6 They were hungry, *so* they had some biscuits.
- 7 By ten o'clock they *had* all left.
- 8 The book *was read by* thousands of people.
- 9 *It was usual* for people to be sent to prison for little reason.
- 10 He *said he would go* on holiday.

## INFORMATION SEARCH 10

Answer to the following questions by referring to the reading passage or to Unit 1 of *Extensive Reading*:

- 1 What is the approximate time lapse between the first documented flight of a man on a kite in China and in Europe?
- 2 What materials do you think were used to make the kite described by Marco Polo? Consider the appropriate sections of Unit 1 of *Extensive Reading*.
- 3 Draw a man-lifting kite of the type Marco Polo saw, after considering the information on this type of kite contained in the text entitled 'Kite Riding' in *Extensive Reading*.

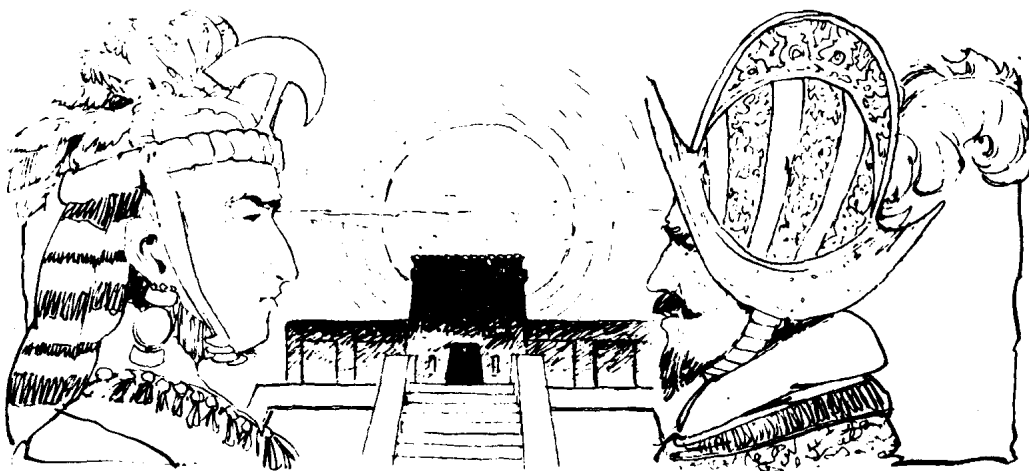
## PUNCTUATION 11

Punctuate the following text correctly:

kites were certainly constructed in the fourth century bc by the philosophers mo ti and kungshu pan the stories of their kite making were famous in chinese tradition kungshu pan made kites shaped like birds which could fly for up to three days he also made his kites turn over mo ti is said to have spent three years building a special kite and we may safely assume that his followers the mohists were much concerned with kite design the mohists were interested in military technology and consequently many of the earliest stories of kites in china concern military uses indeed kungshu p'an is said to have flown one of his kites over the city of sung during a siege though how he utilized it is unclear from the book things uniquely strange which dates from the seventh or eighth century ad we have this interesting account of the military uses of kites chien wen decided to use many kites flying in the sky to communicate knowledge of an emergency to the army leaders at a distance the officers of the enemy told their leader that chien wen was working magic and he ordered bowmen to shoot at the kites at first they all seemed to fall but then they changed into birds which flew away

## WRITING 12

Look back at your answers to Exercise 3. Then divide up into groups of six, and without referring to the original passage, try all together to remember the main points in each section. Then each member of the group can choose a heading (except the conclusion) and try to write the general idea of his section, expressing the ideas in his or her own words. Finally, each group can read its complete version to the class. No one should write more than 100 words.



## UNIT 2

# THE INCAS

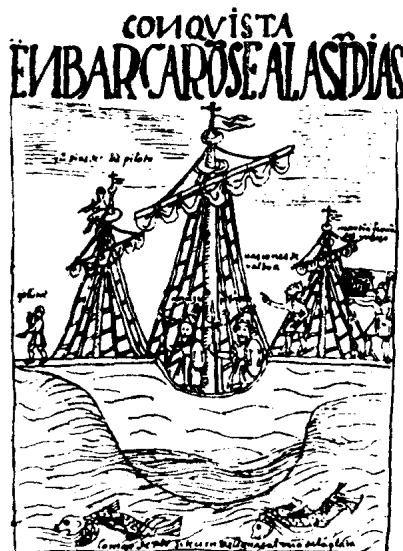
While Cortés was conquering Mexico, Spaniards were beginning to explore the Pacific coast of South America. In 1522 Pascual de Andagoya sailed some two hundred miles along the coast of Colombia and travelled up the river San Juan. He was seeking a tribe called Virú or Birú; and the name of this tribe, altered to 'Peru', came to be applied to a country lying far to the south.

5 Three partners acquired Andagoya's ships and succeeded in raising money to finance another voyage. The three were Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro, both citizens of Panama and owners of Indians there, and Hernando de Luque, a priest. Pizarro sailed in November 1524 with eighty men and four horses. Their first journey was not a success: it reached a place that the Spaniards called, for obvious reasons, Port of Hunger, and Almagro lost an eye in a fight with primitive natives  
10 at 'Burned Village'. No riches were found along the coast, and the adventurers had difficulty obtaining finance for a further attempt.

The three partners entered into a formal contract on 10 March 1526, and Pizarro sailed eight months later. He took some 160 men and a few horses in two small ships commanded by the capable pilot Bartolomé Ruiz. They divided forces: Pizarro camped at the river San Juan. Almagro returned  
15 to get more men, and Ruiz sailed on southwards. Ruiz's ships crossed the equator for the first time in the Pacific, and then, suddenly, came the first contact with the Inca civilisation.

The Spanish ships encountered and captured an ocean-going vessel made of tree-trunks, fitted with fine cotton sails. No one who saw that ship was in any doubt that it was the product of an advanced civilisation. The vessel was on a trading mission to exchange Inca products for red shells. A report of  
20 the ship was sent back to king Charles I, who was also the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.

They were carrying many pieces of silver and gold as personal possessions... including crowns and belts, and protection for the legs and chest; strings of beads and precious stones; mirrors decorated with silver, and cups and other drinking vessels. They were carrying wool and cotton cloth... and pieces of clothing coloured red, blue, yellow and all other colours, and worked with  
25 different figures of birds, animals, fish and trees. They had some tiny weights to weigh gold... There were small precious stones in bags. They were taking all this to trade for fish shells from which they make red and white counters. Eleven of the twenty men on the ship jumped into the sea at the moment



Pizarro and Almagro sail for Peru

of capture, and the pilot Ruiz set six others free on shore. But he was careful to keep three men to be taught Spanish and trained as interpreters for a conquest of this mysterious empire.

30 Ruiz rejoined Pizarro and took the men south to explore the coast of Ecuador. They returned to the uninhabited Isla del Gallo, Island of the Cock. These coasts are very wet, there is nothing to eat, and there were many areas where dense forest grows right to the edge of the water. The Spaniards suffered terribly. Three or four a week were dying of hunger and disease. When a large number of the men had died, an appeal from the despairing survivors reached the Governor of Panama, who  
35 ordered that any men who wished to return should be brought back. They had stayed there mainly because of the determination of Francisco Pizarro. He now drew a line across the sand of the Isla del Gallo and challenged his men to cross it and remain with him. Thirteen brave men did so. They stayed with Pizarro on the island and ensured that exploration would continue.

The following year, Pizarro sailed south on a voyage of exploration, with only a small group of  
40 soldiers. They entered the Gulf of Guayaquil and sighted their first Inca city at Tumbez. An Inca noble visited the ship and a Spaniard, Alonso de Molina, landed with a present of pigs and chickens. Another member of the crew, Pedro de Candia, also landed to confirm Molina's description of Tumbez as a well-ordered town. Here at last was the advanced civilisation that the adventurers had been seeking so eagerly. Candia astonished the inhabitants by firing a gun at a target, but this first  
45 contact between Spaniards and subjects of the Inca was very friendly.

Pizarro sailed on down the coast of Peru as far as the modern Santa river. Two further landings confirmed the importance of the discovery and the sophisticated nature of this mysterious empire. They returned with evidence: llamas, pottery and metal vessels, fine clothing, and more boys to be  
50 trained as interpreters. Pizarro's men had glimpsed the edges of a great civilisation, the product of centuries of development in complete isolation from the rest of mankind.

## EXERCISES

### BEFORE READING 1

Before reading the text, think about the following questions. Discuss them in groups.

- 1 What do you know about civilisations in America before the arrival of the European discoverers?
- 2 At about what date do you imagine the Inca civilisation was at its height?
- 3 Approximately what area do you think the Inca empire covered?

### WORD SCAN 2 (a) Assign a number to each of the following word groups a number, like this:

Place names 1

Names of explorers 2

exploration, explore, journey, sail, ship, vessel, voyage 3

Inca, civilisation, empire 4

despair, die, disease, hunger, suffer, survivor 5

Now write the appropriate number in the margin every time a corresponding word appears, twice or more, if there is more than one example in a line. Count pronouns such as *him* as repetitions of words.

### SKIMMING 3

Use what you have discovered by doing Exercise 2 to help you decide which of the following headings best corresponds with each section of the text:

- 1 An Inca city
- 2 First contact with an advanced civilization
- 3 The second journey
- 4 The Pacific coast of America
- 5 Hunger, disease and death
- 6 The first journey of the three partners
- 7 Further evidence

### COMPREHENSION SCAN 4

Decide whether the following statements are true or false:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1 The name of 'Peru' comes from the name of the people that lived there. | T | F |
| 2 The first expedition was not a success.                                | T | F |
| 3 The second journey started in November 1526.                           | T | F |
| 4 Pizarro made the first contact with the Inca civilisation.             | T | F |
| 5 The Inca vessel they met was flat.                                     | T | F |
| 6 The vessel had red shells on board.                                    | T | F |
| 7 Most of the men returned to Panama from the Isla del Gallo.            | T | F |
| 8 Tumbez is in the Gulf of Guayaquil.                                    | T | F |
| 9 The Incas did not have any pigs or chickens.                           | T | F |
| 10 The Inca civilisation extended a long way down the coast.             | T | F |

### COHESION 5 (a)

Reference chains

It often happens that something is mentioned several times in a paragraph or throughout several paragraphs. In order to avoid excessive repetition, writers use synonyms, pronouns or equivalent phrases. There is a good example of this in paragraph 4 of the text. Underline in this paragraph all the words, phrases and pronouns that refer to *the Inca vessel*.

(b) Choose the most suitable completion for each of the following sentences:

- 1 *the men* (line 31) refers to
  - A the men captured on the raft
  - B the men captured on his expedition
  - C the men from the coast
- 2 *it* (line 38) refers to
  - A the island
  - B the line
  - C the sand
- 3 *this first contact* (lines 45-46) refers to
  - A the meeting between the Spaniards and the Incas at Tumbes
  - B Candia's firing a gun at a target
  - C the contact between the Spaniards and subjects of the Inca on the trading vessel
- 4 *they* (line 49) refers to
  - A two further landings
  - B Pizarro and his men
  - C Pizarro and the Incas

## VOCABULARY

6 (a) Find words or expressions in the text that mean approximately the same as the following words or phrases:

- paragraph 1: group of primitive people; changed  
 paragraph 2: associates; pay for  
 paragraph 4: meet or find; commercial; operation; small circular objects  
 paragraph 5: request for help; dare; make sure  
 paragraph 6: enthusiastically  
 paragraph 7: advanced; see briefly; separation

(b) Now use the words you have found to fill the gaps in these sentences:

- 1 I \_\_\_\_\_ the animal for a moment among the trees.
- 2 They would not reveal the purpose of their \_\_\_\_\_ to anyone.
- 3 The two of them were business \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 If children are kept in \_\_\_\_\_ they do not develop language.
- 5 In the sixteenth century there were hundreds of different \_\_\_\_\_ on the banks of the Amazon.
- 6 Many countries have difficulties in \_\_\_\_\_ their development.
- 7 Many board games are played with \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 The athletes were \_\_\_\_\_ awaiting the beginning of the Olympic Games.
- 9 The people in that place are very \_\_\_\_\_.
- 10 Cortes \_\_\_\_\_ great difficulties in his conquest of Mexico.
- 11 At that time, they were all \_\_\_\_\_ nations engaged in commerce with one another.
- 12 They \_\_\_\_\_ the success of the match by inviting all the best players.
- 13 They've \_\_\_\_\_ their plans so often I don't know what they're doing now.
- 14 The criminal \_\_\_\_\_ to a higher court.
- 15 He \_\_\_\_\_ them to swim across the river with him.

## VARIETIES OF MEANING

7 (a) Match each of the different meanings of *force*, and phrases containing the word *force* with the correct explanation (A-G) below:

- 1 He joined the air *force*.
- 2 He *forced* the door open.

- 3 The *force* of the water was astonishing.
- 4 I don't want to have to *force* them to do it.
- 5 He lifted the car by brute *force*.
- 6 His only alternative was to join *forces* with his old enemy.
- 7 That law is no longer in *force*.
- 8 She *forced* her awful dry biscuits on me.

- A to work together
- B to make a person accept something unwillingly
- C to oblige someone to do something
- D strength
- E troops
- F to break open
- G in effect
- H power

(b) With which of the above meanings does the word appear in the text?

## WORD FAMILIES

8

Choose the correct form of the following words to complete each of the sentences below:

SUCCEED    SUCCESS    SUCCESSIVE    SUCCESSION    SUCCESSOR  
SUCCESSFUL    SUCCESSFULLY

- 1 They completed the mission \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 His \_\_\_\_\_ was due more to luck than to skill.
- 3 they had ten \_\_\_\_\_ years of bad summers.
- 4 If at first you don't \_\_\_\_\_, try again.
- 5 He was a \_\_\_\_\_ businessman.
- 6 There was a \_\_\_\_\_ of disastrous Presidents.
- 7 He handed power over to his \_\_\_\_\_.

## GRAMMAR SCAN

9

The following sentences contain examples of the use of particular grammar patterns. Some of these appear in the passage and some do not. Mark the sentences which give examples of grammar points that appear in the passage, and show on which line(s) they appear.

- 1 *While* John was taller than Mary, Mary could run faster than he could.
- 2 *While* they were playing tennis we were washing the dishes.
- 3 Everybody *who came to the party* had a wonderful time
- 4 The explorers; *who were people of great courage*, overcame all obstacles.
- 5 They paid us at the rate of ten pounds *a day*.
- 6 The sweater I bought didn't fit, so I bought *another*.
- 7 *Another* problem was the length of time it took.
- 8 *We had been looking* for one like that for weeks.
- 9 When they *had weighed* the gold, they melted it down.
- 10 They *had been seen* there before.
- 11 They managed to conquer them *because* there was a civil war.
- 12 They decided to go on *because of* the stories they heard of a land of gold.

## INFORMATION SEARCH

10

Choose the most suitable completion for each of the following sentences. The answers may be found by referring to the reading passage or to Unit 2 of *Extensive Reading*, or to both.

- 1 The name of the Inca emperor was  
A Chalcuchima

- B Atahualpa
  - C Quisquis
  - D Ruminavi
- 2 The Inca empire extended over what is now
- A two countries
  - B three countries
  - C four countries
  - D five countries
- (You will also need to consult an atlas to answer this question)
- 3 The conquistador who was in command of the conquest of Peru was
- A Hernando Pizarro
  - B Francisco Pizarro
  - C Pedro Pizarro
  - D Hernan Cortés
  - E Bartolomé Ruiz
- 4 The main motive for the Spaniards in conquering the Incas was probably
- A precious metals
  - B the conversion of the Indians to Christianity
  - C the desire for fame
  - D curiosity
- 5 The Spaniards conquered the Incas by
- A attacking them with many soldiers
  - B the careful use of horses
  - C capturing the Inca emperor
  - D removing the gold from their temples

## INFORMATION TRANSFER 11

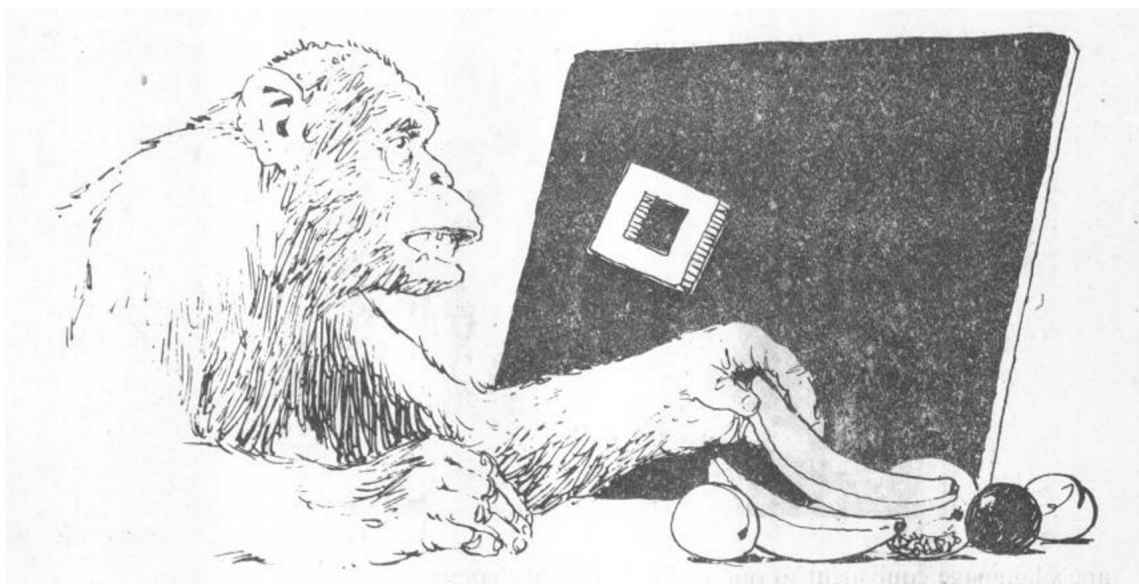
The map which appears below shows the routes of journeys undertaken by the Conquistadors between 1524 and 1532. The map contains some information that does not appear in the text. Using coloured pens or crayons, mark on the map *only* the routes of the different journeys that are mentioned in Unit 2 of this book.

## WRITING 12

Using the accounts of expeditions in the text as a model, write about 100 words describing what you *imagine* happened on the third expedition, January 1531 to April 1532, the route of which appears on the map.



Routes of the early expeditions of Conquistadors



## UNIT 3

# APES AND LANGUAGE

Children in every part of the world acquire language in much the same order, moving from words to complex sentences as a chrysalis turns into a butterfly. The change from chrysalis to butterfly is simple, however, compared to the child's passage from silence to speech. If we place a chrysalis in a bottle, it will not fail to become a butterfly, because that is determined genetically. However, if we isolate a child, 'bottle' it, the child will not emerge with spoken sentences. The transformation of language depends on both genetics and experience — though we still do not fully understand how the two interact. We know that mothers do not drill their children in speech. We also know that unless the child and mother communicate, the child will not develop speech at all.

The chimpanzee is not genetically designed to speak any more than humans are designed to fly. Apes do not develop speech by simple exposure to a speaking 'mother'; but perhaps, with drill, they can develop, if not speech, then a special designed ape language. Could we not devise a language so simple, a training programme so forceful, that the combination would play the role of genetics? We would drill the ape in language the way a teacher drills children in skills they do not acquire naturally — reading, writing and arithmetic, for example.

The language system we invented for the chimpanzees was written rather than spoken. The elementary unit of the invented language was the 'word', a piece of coloured plastic. Each word had a particular colour and shape — a small, blue triangle was the word for apple; a small, pink square, the word for banana. This novel language could be seen but not heard, and touched but never pronounced. The words did not vanish as do spoken words; each plastic word was backed with metal and adhered to a magnetised board. Sentences did not appear and disappear in time but were 'written' piece by piece, in a vertical sequence that remained on the language board for however long was needed.

The trainer placed a word, the piece of coloured plastic, on the table along with the corresponding piece of fruit, a banana. The name for banana, however, was more easily within the chimpanzee's reach than the banana itself. The chimpanzee was encouraged by example to place the word on the language board. The action of placing the appropriate plastic word on the magnetic board was in the